

EXHIBIT 95



STERANKO

STERANKO-0155

FANTASTIC FANZINE II

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CLUB MEMO'S BY GARY GROTH

Welcome once again to the thresholds of the Fantastic Fanzine. Before I start apologizing for the lateness of this issue, I'd like to explain, right away, why this issues editorial (or rather the start of this issues editorial) is placed smack dab in the middle of the Contents page. The explanation is really quite simple; Dave Cockrum's beautiful centerspread breaks this magazine into two nice, even parts (25 pages to each section); I didn't want to break up the continuous "rythm" of our STERANKO INTERVIEW by splitting it up (probably at a very interesting part) by the centerspread. I wanted to keep the interview and portfolio on one side of the book, and I, of course couldn't do that if I printed a 3 page Club Memo's section on pages 3, 4 & 5. (In fact, I originally was planning on saving the first 20 pages of this ish just for STERANKO, his interview, portfolio, and the critiques analyzing his artwork, but the interview was so long that I was forced to place the four page GRAPHIC CRITIQUE on the four pages following Daves THUNDER Agents spread. Oh well, I tried...)

Club Memo's continued on page 32....

STAFF:

Editor and publisher: Gary Groth

Corresponding, typing and layout: Gary Groth

Writers: All subscribers & readers
Staff artists: Dave Cockrum, Robert L. Kline, John G. Fantucchio, Al Grinage, Mike O'Neal, Jay Mike, William Black, Dave Russell, Jeff Rinehart, & BARRY SMITH!

Staff writers: Tony Isabella, Dwight Decker, Bill Cantey, Tom Crawford, Pat Janson, Gordon Matthews.

Pro contributions this issue: Jim Steranko, Jim Steranko, Jim Steranko and Jim Steranko!

INDENTIA:

Fantastic Fanzine # 11: 75¢ @. Next issue due out June 20th. IOCC Membership: \$1.50 for the year of '70. Subscriptions to FF: \$3.00 for 5 issues; \$6.00 for 10 issues. Please specify which issues yours is to start on. Headquarters: 7263 Evanston Road, Springfield, Va. 22150. Back issues available: 6*7, 8*9, 10 all 60¢ each; FF Special: \$1.00. No other back issues available! All the contents of this fan magazine is the copyrighted property of Gary G. Groth and no part of this publication may be reprinted without the written permission from the editor! All drawings in this issue are the copyrighted property of their publisher (National, Marvel).

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'ya have a plug here?" He quickly answered, "NO!" I turned around frantically, looking around the room, back to Jim, and then around the room again, stammering Wha...Wha...Wha... all the time. He let me suffer for a few minutes, and then calmly said, "Of course I have a plug. It's right over there". A couple sighs of relief later the interview began.

The entire interview took no more than 3 hours. I was shooting Jim questions as fast as he could answer them. All throughout the interview, the tape recorder sputtered and wheezed. The cause became quite clear when the tape started clogging up and squeezing out of the cartridge. The caricature to the left, by Robert Kline is only a slight exaggeration of the plights Jim and I encountered during this interview.

Finally the cartridge wouldn't turn, it was so bogged up with tape, and we turned it off. I vainly tried to pop the cartridge out, which only made matters worse in the long run, so Jim told me to forget the recorder for a while, and invited me back into his studio for a look-see. It was a large room in the back of his apartment, made to look smaller with the wealth of books, magazines, comics, pulps, and other related material (including swords, guns and original Wally Wood artwork) stowed within its book shelves.

On his drafting table was the almost finished painting, printed as the cover for Lancer's new book, INFINITY ONE!

After a long talk with Jim in his studio we returned to the (ugh) tape recorder. I finally got it working again, put in a new tape, and we were off again! After finishing the whole thing, we both let loose with a sigh of relief (Jim probably more so than myself).

It was about 6:30 (p.m.) by now, and we had a long way to go, before we reached home. I bid him farewell, warning him that I'd see him again one day.

* * * * *

Although I injected humor into this introduction, I'd like to make perfectly clear that that day was one of the most exciting in my life. It was a great thrill for me to meet STERANKO, whose art I admired in comics - ever since Strange Takes 151. And I can't thank Jim enough for all the help he's been with this issue. Would you believe it? Jim edited his interview from start to finish, and certainly did a better job than I could have ever done. I'm sure that this deep appreciation doesn't come just from me, but from all your many fans who have admired you and your work in the past and who are going to read your interview now. So, start reading, and enter the world of JIM STERANKO:

INTERVIEW: JIM STERANKO CONDUCTED BY GARY GROTH

GARY: Well, Jim to start the interview off, could you give us a brief run down of your career as an artist?

JIM: I wasn't aware I had a run down career. But to answer your question, I've done just about every art job, commercial art job that is available. I've been drawing ever since I was a kid. The first drawings I remember were Flying Tigers, which were what? "P. 38'S" or something like that? And ever since then, I've only made my living at art, one way or another.

GARY: What did you do before you went to Marvel to earn a living?

JIM: Let's see. Before I worked for Marvel, I was an Art Director at an ad agency for a few years. I worked as a sign painter. I worked as an illustrator. I worked as a free lance artist, a printer. As a designer. And that's about it.

GARY: What about your boyhood background?

JIM: What about it?

GARY: Well, for starters, when and where were you born?

JIM: I was born thirty years ago, right in this town, in Reading. Being an old timer now, I mean, I've lived here all my life... Local boy makes good." And so, I've traveled around the country. I haven't done anything really exceptional

when I was a kid, I wouldn't say.

GARY: Have you always lived in Pennsylvania?

JIM: I think I just answered that question, didn't I? Yeah, I always lived in Pennsylvania. This is my town.

GARY: To put it bluntly, why have you left Marvel?

JIM: I'm working for Marvel. I just turned in a romance story for them.

GARY: Then, you haven't left them at all?!

JIM: No, I just finished a story for them. I intend to do some more things....God be willing. I'll be working there for a while because I like to tell stories. The reason I had a little altercation with them is because they edited some of my work. They changed certain things that I didn't feel should be changed.

And I insisted that we couldn't continue on that basis. Any work that I turned in, I insisted be left exactly the way it was. For example, my horror story, "At The Stroke of Midnight", had a line of dialogue added. The meek husband said "I'm nervous because it's closer to midnight" or something like that; simply a gratuitous line. It wasn't my title and I didn't have that line in it. And it had nothing to do with the story. Stan originally wanted that story to be called "Let Them Eat Cake", which I didn't

them look professional. I preferred art in which the human figures dominated the scene and in which backgrounds were kept simple and uncluttered, in the manner of Carmine Infantino's work on the Flash. However, I soon realized that while simplicity might be aesthetically pleasing in most cases, I was going to have to concoct a special set of standards before I could attempt to understand this man, Steranko. For the time being, it was enough merely to acknowledge that his was the best art yet to grace the SHIELD strip!

Two years later, Jim Steranko was the most talked about artist in Fandom. SHIELD had become a twenty page monthly magazine, written and drawn by Steranko. It wasn't until some time after that, that the excitement he generated began to subside, and fandom began to ask itself if he really had accomplished anything so out of the ordinary after all. Perhaps only now can an objective evaluation of his work be made.

It is interesting to note that Steranko writes just like he draws. In both his art and his writing, he has a tendency to stray from the subject a little. It's as if minor details catch his attention, and he moves in to get a closer look, sometimes neglecting his appointed task of advancing a story plot.

Look at SHIELD three, for example. At the outset, Steranko appears to be more interested in the mysterious Rachel than in pitting hero against villain. Then at the end, when he realizes his plot has not advanced much from the beginning he is forced to wrap the tale up in a single full page flashback scene (page 130). In only one panel, he introduces the real villain, follows him through 25 years of his life, reveals his most recent diabolical machinations, and destroys him. Another writer might have devoted less space to the Hellbound mystery, since it is, after all, only a very small part of the villains threat to Fury and the world.

Or take SHIELD one, where the tragedy of Elip Hason almost supplants the clash between Fury and Scorpio as the thing that the story is about.

I'm not saying it's wrong, this tendency of Steranko's to concentrate on one small aspect of a story or a picture. But it certainly is exasperating to someone who was brought up on conventional comics with stories in which there was a plot and one or more sub-plots, each of which knew its proper importance relative to the main plot. But perhaps the most significant contribution Jim Steranko can make is to demonstrate that in the realm of art, there is no such thing as right and wrong.



"HE COULDN'T WAIT"

by Dwight Decker

Steranko has left comics for good, they say. Paperbacks and pulp magazines are his new playground.

One may not care for Steranko as a person. The personality he displays in his interviews has been too flipant, too casual ... almost callous -- that of a hedonistic swinger who takes his talents and abilities too much for granted, not realizing quite what it is that flows through his fingers.

Yet, in the field of creative endeavor, the Sunday School Platinudes are over-turned. It means nothing what a man is. It is only what he can do that matters. And Steranko can do.

It is tragic that a talent such as his is leaving the comic book, because in only two short years he left an influence that will be there in comics for some years to come. If he had only remained, and had been given freer reign, he would have force-fed the field with a new life and vitality.

Well, he's gone now. Comic books are still generally the same warmed-over, Code-sanitized cliches, tiredly ground out by disinterested hack writers and hack artists, published by frightened, unambitious little men scared to take any chances or make any experiments, content with each years slowly diminishing income and circulations.

Steranko wasn't afraid. He innovated, he devised, and he dreamed --- only to see what the editors did to it. Only to see how little he was paid for it.

So he left.

Ditko faced the same frustrations, and where is he now...? At Charlton, drawing tired repetitious jungle, western and war pointlessness. Perhaps he is staying with the comic book in hopes that some day he will be allowed to create freely.

But Steranko is young, and he can't wait.

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